

## **MINUTES**

### **PLANNING BOARD**

#### **TOWNSHIP OF BERKELEY HEIGHTS, NEW JERSEY**

##### **Regular Meeting**

December 10, 2014

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:30 PM by Michael Einbinder in the Public Meeting Room.

Mr. Einbinder confirmed that the meeting was being held in conformance with all regulations of the SUNSHINE LAW and proper notice had been given to the Courier News; also, the Agenda had been posted in Town Hall, Board Office, and supplied to the Township Clerk at least forty-eight hours prior to the meeting. The Agenda items will not necessarily be heard in the order listed and the meeting will not continue significantly past 10:30 PM.

##### **Roll Call:**

Members present were Mr. Einbinder, Mr. Niceforo, Mr. Beal, Mr. Bocchino, Mr. Cunningham and Ms. Perna. Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bruno, Mr. Graziano, Mr. Hall and Mr. Monaco were absent.

##### **Adoption of Minutes:**

November 5, 2014

A motion was made by Mr. Einbinder, seconded by Mr. Niceforo, to adopt the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 5, 2014 as presented. The voice vote was 6-0.

##### **Informal Concept Reviews:**

##### **Westminster Presbyterian Church, 725 Mountain Avenue (at corner of Plainfield Avenue & Mountain Avenue), Block 2006, Lot 32 (R-15 Zone)**

Proposed minor subdivision.

Ted Romanko, representing Westminster as a member of the Church, stated that the Church has a piece of property that they want to subdivide.

Tom Murphy, engineer, distributed two plans that the Church is considering that involve the subdivision of the property for possible sale. There is an existing house on the property that is about 75-80 years old and in need of a lot of repair. The Church is considering tearing down the house and possibly developing the property in the back which would require a widening of the existing right of way. Both concepts are being

considered and would be in compliance except that development of the property in the back may require a variance if the right of way is not extended.

Discussion took place regarding the two plans including the effect on the adjacent property, widening of the right of way, possible variances that would be required for development of the property, and the Board's opinions as to flag lots.

Mr. Romanko advised that the Church leaders will make a decision in the next month or two and then file an application.

**Paone Realty Associates, L.L.C., 308-310-312 Springfield Avenue, Block 801, Lots 28 and 28.01 (HB-2 Zone)**

Proposal for reconstruction of the 2-story building damaged by fire. GRA Architects is the design firm.

James Ramentol, architect, stated that the applicant's existing building was damaged by fire. He distributed drawings showing the proposed elevation of the two story structure and noted that the applicant intends to put in an elevator to comply with ADA requirements and to make the property more rentable. The front elevation faces Springfield Avenue and side faces the new Chase Bank. The existing windows and brick façade will remain and the applicant wants to enhance the entrance to the building. Existing parking in the front yard will continue and a variance may be needed, depending on how the parking requirement is calculated. There are now 74 spaces on the site. The applicant will put in pavers and street lights as required by the downtown standards.

Discussion took place regarding the parking and it was suggested that Mr. Ramentol contact Neglia Engineering to discuss the parking.

Mr. Ramentol further stated that the applicant will provide a list of the tenants and prospective tenants. He has had his office at that building for three years and has never seen the parking lot full. The building is not being designed for retail use, only as an office building and the applicant would agree to a condition that there be no retail.

Mike Paone, owner of the building, stated that before the fire the building was 100% occupied and there were trucks parking in the back and there was never a parking problem.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Ramentol stated that they are not creating any additional office space. He will contact the Board Engineer to discuss the parking criteria.

**Sadl Wine, Inc., 462 Springfield Avenue, Block 702, Lot 3 (DD Zone)**

Mr. Bimal Parekh is interested in purchasing the property to the east of DiMaio's restaurant for a proposed liquor store. Robert P. Coletta is the architect for this project.

Robert Coletta, architect, stated that the property is 50' by 98' and located east of DiMaio's restaurant. Mr. Coletta provided a drawing of the proposed project. The existing building has been up for sale. The prospective purchaser wants to put up a liquor store using the Kings liquor license and feels he needs this amount of square footage to be successful. The proposed parking meets the required zoning but it would be impossible to put a building on this site with parking in the rear so a variance is required for front parking. If this is not approved the prospective purchaser has said he will not purchase the property. Variances would be required for building location, setbacks and parking in the front.

Discussion took place regarding the proposal and it was noted that this is not a great project and rear parking would be preferred, but this would eliminate an eyesore in the middle of town. It was suggested that the applicant consider placing the building in the front of the property with no parking.

Mr. Coletta will pass the Board's suggestion along to the prospective purchaser and the Board members will take a look at the property and the area around it.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Mr. Einbinder, seconded by Mr. Beal, to adjourn the meeting. The voice vote was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Regina Giardina, Secretary Pro-Tem